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FM AMEMBASSY KINSHASA
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INFO RUEHXR/RWANDA COLLECTIVE
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UNCLAS KINSHASA 001057

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A
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SUBJECT: EASTERN DRC NOTES - NOVEMBER 28

REF: KINSHASA 1026

¶1. (U) The items contained in this report consist principally of spot information from various sources. This report is not exhaustive, nor can all the information contained therein be confirmed at this time.

Security Situation

¶2. (SBU) MONUC Goma reported that CNDP took Ishasha town on the DRC - Ugandan border November 27. The border crossing at Ishasha is one of several crossings between Lake Albert and Lake Kivu that are now under CNDP control. MONUC noted that CNDP now controls all of Rutshuru territory and 60 percent of Masisi territory.

¶3. (SBU) Goma poloff witnessed approximately 30 MONUC peacekeepers departing Goma Airport to Ishasha November 28. The MONUC element boarded helicopters previously scheduled to transport International Facilitation (IF) representatives to Kasiki.

¶4. (SBU) USAID/DART team reports that USAID/OFDA partner IRC had a truck "requisitioned" by CNDP forces November 27 in Rugari for the purposes of transporting munitions. The vehicle was later returned to IRC.

¶5. (SBU) MONUC Goma said CNDP has established tax systems for store owners in Kiwanja and Rutshuru and levies a duty of 300-400 USD per truck transiting the Rutshuru town area for Goma.

Political Developments

¶6. (SBU) The previously scheduled November 28 IF trip to Kasiki was canceled due to the lack of MONUC helicopter transport. The delegation, composed of IF and representatives of the GDRC, was to monitor the status of demobilized FDLR-RUD members awaiting relocation in DRC or repatriation to Rwanda.

¶7. (SBU) Colonel Mamba, GDRC representative to the Joint Monitoring Group-Task Force, told Goma Poloff that SESG Obasanjo may not arrive in Kinshasa until November 29 vice the previously reported November 28 (reftel). He also said that the meeting between the Foreign Ministers of the DRC and Rwanda in Goma has been postponed from November 29 to December 4.

Humanitarian Situation

¶8. (SBU) USAID/DART team reported November 27 that Rutshuru town's civilian population has returned in larger numbers than has Kiwanja's, but fluxes between the two locations make accurate estimates difficult. Many Kiwanja residents spend the night in Rutshuru to escape CNDP "exactions" and return home during the day.

Local USAID/DART sources claim that Kiwanja is three quarters empty and that most residents have fled north to Kanyabayonga.

¶9. (SBU) MONUC estimates that the number of huts in the IDP camp at the MONUC Kiwanja base has grown from 150 to 640. A Rutshuru based NGO reported the number of families at the Kiwanja camp has increased to approximately 1,200, including recent arrivals from Kinyadoni and Ngwenda who fled CNDP movement northwards to Ishasha.

¶10. (SBU) UNHCR reports 13,000 Congolese citizens crossed into Uganda November 26-27 due to CNDP activity near Ishasha, bringing the total to 27,000 since August 2008.

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